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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR (Lithuania)

DATE DISTR. 23 August 1948

SUBJECT Soviet Projects for Development of Memel Area

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SUPPLEMENT TO  
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1. It is reported that intensive work has been carried out on Memel harbor since the end of 1947 to convert it into a modern naval base. The Soviets allegedly consider it the best harbor on the Baltic coast, and an excellent base for an invasion of southern Sweden. It is planned to use the harbor chiefly as a submarine base.
2. Between Kranz Beek and Sarkau (55°N; 20°30'E), the Kurische Nehrung is being pierced to make a second entrance to the Kurisches Haff. This work is being pressed on by the Soviets at great speed with forced labor from the local population.
3. Workers are also being conscripted for work on the Oginski Canal (approximately 53°N; 12°E), which connects water traffic between the Memel and Dnieper Rivers. The Soviets hope to make it large enough to pass light and medium warships between the Black Sea and the Baltic. A large draining project on the Pripet Marshes is allied to this undertaking.
4. The Russians are planning to resettle the Memel area and part of former East Prussia with persons (including Germans) born in the areas and in Lithuania who are now in Poland or the Soviet Zone of Germany. These people will be called upon to return to their native land or be arrested as deserters.

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